



Making the Connection: International Human Rights and Poverty Workshops in Iqaluit

To enhance our understanding of Northern experiences of poverty, Canada Without Poverty (CWP) is travelling to all three territories in May 2017 to meet with local partners, learn from their experiences of poverty, and engage in dialogue around human rights. In Iqaluit, CWP is excited to be working with the Nunavut Law Society to discuss poverty in the community and share information on what is happening nationally – and internationally – on poverty, hunger, and homelessness through a human rights approach.

Who is CWP? CWP is a non-partisan, not-for-profit, and charitable organization dedicated to ending poverty in Canada through a human rights approach. The organization was created in 1971 as an outcome of the Poor People's Conference, a national gathering of low-income individuals, under the name National Anti-Poverty Organization (NAPO). For over 40 years, we have been led by a Board of Directors who have personally experienced poverty and we have been working to amplify the voices of people living in low-income and ensure their rights are not ignored. As part of its activities, CWP offers in-person and online [workshops](#) and has created several [publications](#) on how international human rights mechanisms can be used to address poverty, homelessness, and hunger in Canada.

Who is coming from CWP? Michèle Biss will be representing CWP during these visits in the territories. Ms. Biss is a human rights lawyer and the Legal Education and Outreach Coordinator for Canada Without Poverty. She holds an Honours Bachelor of Arts with a specialization in Religious studies and a minor in English as well as a Law degree, both from University of Ottawa. She has extensive professional experience working for marginalized groups through casework, research, community legal education, and participation in United Nations treaty body reviews. Her particular areas of interest include support for women, persons with disabilities, recent immigrants, and persons living in poverty.

When will the workshop take place? The session will be from 5:30 to 7:30 pm on Wednesday, May 17th. Refreshments will be provided.

What will the workshop include? The workshops will be an opportunity to discuss international human rights, the realities of poverty in Canada – especially the unique experiences of Northern poverty – and the upcoming Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy (CPRS). These workshops will feature the following components:

1. An **overview of international human rights law**. This part of the session will be interactive and highlight local anti-poverty programs and policies to demonstrate how human rights are/can be applied;
2. A **presentation and discussion of the upcoming Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy** and the growing momentum for a rights-based approach to the strategy; and
3. A listening circle throughout the workshop for participants to **share experiences about poverty in the North**.

What are the learning objectives? This course will tackle questions like “why do we have international treaties that guarantee rights?” and “where are economic and social rights found in Canada’s domestic laws?” while exploring the distinct roles of federal, territorial/provincial, regional, and local governments in ending poverty. Participants will come away from the dialogue with: a deeper understanding of international human rights law; a rights-based approach to the federal government’s forthcoming poverty reduction strategy, and the role of economic and social rights in Canada.